

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

5           A system for providing a local computer user with detailed activity information  
regarding remote users, in order to assist the local user in determining whether to initiate  
a communication session with a remote user. The system provides activity information  
describing the number of instant messaging sessions one or more remote users are  
currently involved in, the identities of participants in those sessions, activity levels, time  
10   period information, and other information. The system further provides detailed activity  
information describing recent instant messaging sessions of one or more remote users.